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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 000240

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PGOV KDEM I2
SUBJECT: NORTH BAGHDAD ELECTION SECURITY

Classified By: Classified by Baghdad PRT Team Leader Thomas Lynch, reas
ons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) This is an ePRT Baghdad North message.

¶2. (C) SUMMARY: District governors (Qa'im Makams) in Northern Baghdad's rural areas (Qadas) expect their role in the upcoming election to involve implementing the Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) security plan (distributed January 23), promoting citizen participation in the election, and monitoring political rallies. In both Taji and Tarmiyah Qadas, an election security committee that includes Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army representatives has started to meet. So far, the only request by a North Baghdad district governor for U.S. election assistance was for tents or booths to facilitate security checks for female voters at polling places in the Taji area. In announcing their elections security plan on January 23, the Iraqi security services did make it clear they were very concerned about the potential for female suicide bombers. END SUMMARY.

ROLE OF LOCAL PUBLIC MANAGERS

¶3. (C) Taji Qa'im Makam Ra'ed Faisal 'Abbas (Shi'a) and Tarmiyah Qa'im Makam Muhammad Jassim al-Mashadani (Sunni) told ePRT officers the role of local government in the upcoming Iraqi election will be to implement the Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) security plan, promote citizen participation in the election, and monitor rallies held by all candidates and political parties. Abbas said it was important for the local government to treat all candidates and parties equally. Both Qa'im Makams explained they supervise the Iraqi Police (IP) in their areas and said that maintaining safe and secure polling sites will require coordination with the Iraqi Army (IA) and USF. Their statements were consistent with the Provincial Powers Law (PPL), also known as Law 21/Article 41(3), which empowers them to "maintain security and order; protect citizen's rights, lives, and property." (NOTE: Although the PPL provides local public managers with direct supervisory authority over the IP, only the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) has the authority to hire IP officers, appoint Chiefs of Police, and provide funds for check points and IP posts. END NOTE.)

LOCAL-LEVEL COORDINATION HAS STARTED

¶4. (C) The Taji Security Committee, composed of local government, IP, and IA representatives has started to meet on a weekly basis to prepare for elections. The Tarmiyah Security Committee, which has a similar composition, has held one election-focused meeting, and the committee chairperson said all future weekly meetings will focus on the elections. In past meetings with ePRT officers, officials in both jurisdictions expressed assumptions that security operations would be similar to those in place for the January 2009

provincial elections. However, the 2010 elections plan the BOC released January 23 appears to differ because USF will not take the lead on election security.

REQUEST FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE

15. (C) The only request for U.S. assistance so far has been for tents or booths to facilitate security checks for female voters at polling places in the Taji area. This request was not included in USG-funded packages for IHEC's Government Election Offices (GEOs) because that support excluded the polling stations. ePRT North Team Leader communicated this request to the U.S. Army commanders in Taji. (NOTE: At the Jan 23 release of the BOC's election security plan, Iraqi military leaders noted their concern with the possibility of female suicide bombers disrupting the March elections. END NOTE.)

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